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NOTICE OF ALLOWANCE AND FEE(S) DUE

24126 7590 01/14/2003

ST. ONGE STEWARD JOHNSTON & REENS, LLC
986 BEDFORD STREET
STAMFORD, CT 06905-5619

EXAMINER

OCAMPO, MARIANNE S

ART UNIT

CLASS-SUBCLASS

1723

210-435000

DATE MAILED: 01/14/2003

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/815,857	03/23/2001	Roger Lacasse	01393-P0047A	5808

TITLE OF INVENTION: FILTER DEVICE FOR FILTERING A LIQUID

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APPLN. TYPE	SMALL ENTITY	ISSUE FEE	PUBLICATION FEE	TOTAL FEE(S) DUE	DATE DUE
nonprovisional	YES	\$650	\$300	\$950	04/14/2003

THE APPLICATION IDENTIFIED ABOVE HAS BEEN EXAMINED AND IS ALLOWED FOR ISSUANCE AS A PATENT. PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS CLOSED. THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWANCE IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS. THIS APPLICATION IS SUBJECT TO WITHDRAWAL FROM ISSUE AT THE INITIATIVE OF THE OFFICE OR UPON PETITION BY THE APPLICANT. SEE 37 CFR 1.313 AND MPEP 1308.

THE ISSUE FEE AND PUBLICATION FEE (IF REQUIRED) MUST BE PAID WITHIN THREE MONTHS FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS NOTICE OR THIS APPLICATION SHALL BE REGARDED AS ABANDONED. THIS STATUTORY PERIOD CANNOT BE EXTENDED. SEE 35 U.S.C. 151. THE ISSUE FEE DUE INDICATED ABOVE REFLECTS A CREDIT FOR ANY PREVIOUSLY PAID ISSUE FEE APPLIED IN THIS APPLICATION. THE PTOL-85B (OR AN EQUIVALENT) MUST BE RETURNED WITHIN THIS PERIOD EVEN IF NO FEE IS DUE OR THE APPLICATION WILL BE REGARDED AS ABANDONED.

HOW TO REPLY TO THIS NOTICE:

I. Review the SMALL ENTITY status shown above.

If the SMALL ENTITY is shown as YES, verify your current SMALL ENTITY status:

A. If the status is the same, pay the TOTAL FEE(S) DUE shown above.

B. If the status is changed, pay the PUBLICATION FEE (if required) and twice the amount of the ISSUE FEE shown above and notify the United States Patent and Trademark Office of the change in status, or

If the SMALL ENTITY is shown as NO:

A. Pay TOTAL FEE(S) DUE shown above, or

B. If applicant claimed SMALL ENTITY status before, or is now claiming SMALL ENTITY status, check the box below and enclose the PUBLICATION FEE and 1/2 the ISSUE FEE shown above.

Applicant claims SMALL ENTITY status.
See 37 CFR 1.27.

II. PART B - FEE(S) TRANSMITTAL should be completed and returned to the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) with your ISSUE FEE and PUBLICATION FEE (if required). Even if the fee(s) have already been paid, Part B - Fee(s) Transmittal should be completed and returned. If you are charging the fee(s) to your deposit account, section "4b" of Part B - Fee(s) Transmittal should be completed and an extra copy of the form should be submitted.

III. All communications regarding this application must give the application number. Please direct all communications prior to issuance to Box ISSUE FEE unless advised to the contrary.

IMPORTANT REMINDER: Utility patents issuing on applications filed on or after Dec. 12, 1980 may require payment of maintenance fees. It is patentee's responsibility to ensure timely payment of maintenance fees when due.

PART B - FEE(S) TRANSMITTAL

Complete and send this form, together with applicable fee(s), to: **Mail** Box ISSUE FEE
Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231
Fax (703)746-4000

INSTRUCTIONS: This form should be used for transmitting the ISSUE FEE and PUBLICATION FEE (if required). Blocks 1 through 4 should be completed where appropriate. All further correspondence including the Patent, advance orders and notification of maintenance fees will be mailed to the current correspondence address as indicated unless corrected below or directed otherwise in Block 1, by (a) specifying a new correspondence address; and/or (b) indicating a separate "FEE ADDRESS" for maintenance fee notifications.

CURRENT CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS (Note: Legibly mark-up with any corrections or use Block 1)

24126	7590	01/14/2003
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ST. ONGE STEWARD JOHNSTON & REENS, LLC
986 BEDFORD STREET
STAMFORD, CT 06905-5619

Note: A certificate of mailing can only be used for domestic mailings of the Fee(s) Transmittal. This certificate cannot be used for any other accompanying papers. Each additional paper, such as an assignment or formal drawing, must have its own certificate of mailing or transmission.

Certificate of Mailing or Transmission
I hereby certify that this Fee(s) Transmittal is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage for first class mail in an envelope addressed to the Box Issue Fee address above, or being facsimile transmitted to the USPTO, on the date indicated below.

	(Depositor's name)
	(Signature)
	(Date)

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09/815,857	03/23/2001	Roger Lacasse	01393-P0047A	5808

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nonprovisional	YES	\$650	\$300	\$950	04/14/2003

EXAMINER	ART UNIT	CLASS-SUBCLASS
OCAMPO, MARIANNE S	1723	210-435000

1. Change of correspondence address or indication of "Fee Address" (37 CFR 1.363).

Change of correspondence address (or Change of Correspondence Address form PTO/SB/122) attached.

"Fee Address" indication (or "Fee Address" Indication form PTO/SB/47; Rev 03-02 or more recent) attached. Use of a Customer Number is required.

2. For printing on the patent front page, list (1) the names of up to 3 registered patent attorneys or agents OR, alternatively, (2) the name of a single firm (having as a member a registered attorney or agent) and the names of up to 2 registered patent attorneys or agents. If no name is listed, no name will be printed.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

3. ASSIGNEE NAME AND RESIDENCE DATA TO BE PRINTED ON THE PATENT (print or type)

PLEASE NOTE: Unless an assignee is identified below, no assignee data will appear on the patent. Inclusion of assignee data is only appropriate when an assignment has been previously submitted to the USPTO or is being submitted under separate cover. Completion of this form is NOT a substitute for filing an assignment.

(A) NAME OF ASSIGNEE

(B) RESIDENCE: (CITY and STATE OR COUNTRY)

Please check the appropriate assignee category or categories (will not be printed on the patent) individual corporation or other private group entity government

4a. The following fee(s) are enclosed:

4b. Payment of Fee(s):

Issue Fee

A check in the amount of the fee(s) is enclosed.

Publication Fee

Payment by credit card. Form PTO-2038 is attached.

Advance Order - # of Copies _____

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge the required fee(s), or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account Number _____ (enclose an extra copy of this form).

Commissioner for Patents is requested to apply the Issue Fee and Publication Fee (if any) or to re-apply any previously paid issue fee to the application identified above.

(Authorized Signature)

(Date)

NOTE: The Issue Fee and Publication Fee (if required) will not be accepted from anyone other than the applicant, a registered attorney or agent, or the assignee or other party in interest as shown by the records of the United States Patent and Trademark Office.

This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.311. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.14. This collection is estimated to take 12 minutes to complete, including gathering, preparing, and submitting the completed application form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D.C. 20231. DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, Washington, DC 20231.

Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

TRANSMIT THIS FORM WITH FEE(S)



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24126	7590	01/14/2003	EXAMINER	
ST. ONGE STEWARD JOHNSTON & REENS, LLC 986 BEDFORD STREET STAMFORD, CT 06905-5619			OCAMPO, MARIANNE S	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			1723	
DATE MAILED: 01/14/2003				

Determination of Patent Term Adjustment under 35 U.S.C. 154 (b)
(application filed on or after May 29, 2000)

The patent term adjustment to date is 0 days. If the issue fee is paid on the date that is three months after the mailing date of this notice and the patent issues on the Tuesday before the date that is 28 weeks (six and a half months) after the mailing date of this notice, the term adjustment will be 0 days.

If a continued prosecution application (CPA) was filed in the above-identified application, the filing date that determines patent term adjustment is the filing date of the most recent CPA.

Applicant will be able to obtain more detailed information by accessing the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. (<http://pair.uspto.gov>)

Any questions regarding the patent term extension or adjustment determination should be directed to the Office of Patent Legal Administration at (703)305-1383.



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ST. ONGE STEWARD JOHNSTON & REENS, LLC 986 BEDFORD STREET STAMFORD, CT 06905-5619 UNITED STATES			OCAMPO, MARIANNE S	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			1723	
				DATE MAILED: 01/14/2003

Notice of Fee Increase on January 1, 2003

If a reply to a "Notice of Allowance and Fee(s) Due" is filed in the Office on or after January 1, 2003, then the amount due will be higher than that set forth in the "Notice of Allowance and Fee(s) Due" since there will be an increase in fees effective on January 1, 2003. See Revision of Patent and Trademark Fees for Fiscal Year 2003; Final Rule, 67 Fed. Reg. 70847, 70849 (November 27, 2002).

The current fee schedule is accessible from: <http://www.uspto.gov/main/howtofees.htm>.

If the issue fee paid is the amount shown on the "Notice of Allowance and Fee(s) Due," but not the correct amount in view of the fee increase, a "Notice to Pay Balance of Issue Fee" will be mailed to applicant. In order to avoid processing delays associated with mailing of a "Notice to Pay Balance of Issue Fee," if the response to the Notice of Allowance and Fee(s) due form is to be filed on or after January 1, 2003 (or mailed with a certificate of mailing on or after January 1, 2003), the issue fee paid should be the fee that is required at the time the fee is paid. If the issue fee was previously paid, and the response to the "Notice of Allowance and Fee(s) Due" includes a request to apply a previously-paid issue fee to the issue fee now due, then the difference between the issue fee amount at the time the response is filed and the previously paid issue fee should be paid. See Manual of Patent Examining Procedure, Section 1308.01 (Eighth Edition, August 2001).

Questions relating to issue and publication fee payments should be directed to the Customer Service Center of the Office of Patent Publication at (703) 305-8283.

AS8

Notice of Allowability	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/815,857	LACASSE ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	

Marianne S. Ocampo 1723

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTO-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. This communication is responsive to amendments filed on 10-28-02.
2. The allowed claim(s) is/are 3-4,6-9,10-12,13,18,20-22,24 and 25-27 renumbered as 2-3,7-10,4-6,14,15,11-13,1 and 16-18.
3. The drawings filed on 23 March 2001 are accepted by the Examiner.
4. Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All
 - b) Some*
 - c) None
 of the:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

5. Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
 - (a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
6. Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application. **THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.**

7. A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
8. CORRECTED DRAWINGS must be submitted.
 - (a) including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) hereto or 2) to Paper No. _____.
 - (b) including changes required by the proposed drawing correction filed _____, which has been approved by the Examiner.
 - (c) including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No. _____.

Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the top margin (not the back) of each sheet. The drawings should be filed as a separate paper with a transmittal letter addressed to the Official Draftsperson.

9. DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No. _____. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449), Paper No. _____. | <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Amendment/Comment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

Notice of Allowability Attachment

Statement of Reasons for Allowance

1. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: the closest prior art include Nurse Jr. et al. (US Patents 6,360,898B1 & 6,306,299B1), Hoffman et al. (US 2,750,045) and Bosnjak (US 3,951,818). However, none of these closest prior art and those searched have disclosed or rendered obvious a prefilter having the combination of limitations recited in the base claim 24, and in particular the limitations of a filter housing having a top and a bottom portions, a lower filter unit located in the bottom portion of the housing having superposed and spaced apart inclined lamellar structures having the shape of hollow truncated structures and the lower filter unit having a discharge chamber located in a centrally located zone of the lower filter unit, and an upper filter unit located in the top portion of the housing for further filtering the liquid previously filtered by the lower filter unit which comprises of superposed and spaced apart truncated hollow structures similar (defined as to be having the same shape and size) in shape and size and the upper filter unit having a reception chamber in a centrally located zone thereof in fluid communication with the discharge chamber of the lower filter unit and a discharge chamber in the top portion of the housing around the upper filter unit and further having the limitations of having a means for hermetically separating the reception chamber of the lower filter unit and the discharge chamber of the upper filter unit and a mounting means for mounting the upper and lower filter units vertically in the filter housing, as

in claim 24, and a prefilter having the limitations claimed in claim 25 and further having the limitation of an inlet chamber extending at a bottom end of a filter housing in fluid communication with a reception chamber of the filter housing via an outlet of the inlet chamber hermetically connected to an inlet of the filter housing and the inlet chamber having a sidewall provided with a plurality of slots sized and shaped for receiving and prefiltering a liquid to be filtered and a mounting means for mounting filter units vertically in the filter housing, as in claim 25. Here in both claims 24 and 25, the limitation of a “mounting means for mounting the filter units vertically in the filter housing” invokes 35 USC 112, 6th paragraph “*means plus function*” language, which is defining the characteristics of a machine or manufacture invention, and this particular claim limitation must be interpreted to read on only the structures or materials disclosed in the specification and “equivalents thereof.” (See M.P.E.P. section 2106, two en banc decisions of the Federal Circuit have made clear that the Office is to interpret means plus function language according to 35 U.S.C. 112, sixth paragraph. See also *In re Donaldson*, 16 F.3d 1189, 1193, 29 USPQ2d 1845, 1848 (Fed. Cir. 1994).) In this particular instance, the examiner has interpreted this limitation according to applicant’s specification, which discloses only one equivalent structure for this “mounting means for mounting filter units vertically in the housing” being a hanger (54) having a lower portion for extending downwardly in the filter housing and brackets (58) in the lower portion connectable to an uppermost truncated cone/filter unit for suspending the upper and lower filter units in the filter housing (see specification page 11, lines 9 – 12). In addition, in claim 24, the limitation, “*a means for hermetically separating the reception chamber of the lower filter unit and the discharge chamber of the upper filter unit*”

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also invokes 35 USC 112, 6th paragraph “*means plus function*” language, and here, being interpreted by the examiner, according to applicant’s specification, which discloses only one equivalent structure being an annular water-tight liner (70) mounted on an inside rim formed by an annular restriction (66), as in page 12, lines 26 – 30 and page 13, lines 1 – 4.

2. Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled “Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance.”

3. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Marianne S. Ocampo whose telephone number is (703) 305-1039. The examiner can normally be reached on Mondays to Fridays from 8:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M..

4. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner’s supervisor, Wanda Walker can be reached on (703) 308-0457. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 872-9310 for regular communications and (703) 872-9311 for After Final communications.

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5. Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0661.

W.L.W.
M.S.O.

January 13, 2003

W.L. Walker
W. L. WALKER
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 1700